IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A ceramic circuit board prepared by a method that comprises integrally joining a circuit layer ~~composed of~~ comprising a clad member ~~including~~ that comprises an Al plate and an Al-Si brazing material to a ceramic substrate, wherein a surface of ~~the~~ said clad member adjacent to the Al-Si brazing material is joined to ~~the~~ said ceramic substrate with an Al alloy film therebetween, ~~the~~ said Al alloy film having a thickness of less than 1 μm and ~~being~~ provided on the surface of the ceramic substrate, and

wherein said Al alloy film comprises at least one rare earth element selected from the group consisting of Y, Sc, La, Ce, Nd, Sm, Gd, Tb, Dy, Er, Th, and Sr in an amount of 1 to 5 atomic percent.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The ceramic circuit board according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ said ceramic substrate comprises an aluminum nitride sintered body, a silicon nitride sintered body, a silicon carbide sintered body, or a sialon sintered body.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The ceramic circuit board according to claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ a Al content of ~~the~~ said Al-Si brazing material is 85 mass percent or more and the Si content of the Al-Si brazing material is in the range of 6 to 15 mass percent.

Claim 4 (Canceled):

Claim 5 (Withdrawn - Currently Amended): A method for producing a ceramic circuit board ~~prepared by~~ comprising:

integrally joining a circuit layer ~~composed of~~ comprising a clad member ~~including~~ that comprises an Al plate and an Al-Si brazing material to an Al alloy film, wherein said circuit layer ~~composed of the~~ comprising said clad member ~~including the Al plate and the Al-Si brazing material~~ and a ceramic substrate having ~~the~~ said Al alloy film thereon overlap with each other, and

heating said circuit layer and said ceramic substrate ~~are then joined by heating~~ at a temperature of 580°C to 630°C in an atmosphere of vacuum of 10^{-2} Pa or lower while applying a pressing load ~~is applied~~ to the overlapped the clad member and the ceramic substrate so that the pressure of the load is 2 kg/cm^2 or more to join said circuit layer to said ceramic substrate,

wherein said Al alloy film comprises at least one rare earth element selected from the group consisting of Y, Sc, La, Ce, Nd, Sm, Gd, Tb, Dy, Er, Th, and Sr in an amount of 1 to 5 atomic percent.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A power module comprising:

a ceramic circuit board prepared by a method that comprises integrally joining a circuit layer ~~composed of~~ comprising a clad member ~~including~~ that comprises an Al plate and an Al-Si brazing material to a ceramic substrate, wherein a surface of said clad member adjacent to said Al-Si brazing material is joined to said ceramic substrate with an Al alloy film therebetween, said Al alloy film having a thickness of less than 1 μm and ~~being~~ provided on the surface of said ceramic substrate;

a semiconductor element mounted on said circuit layer; and

a heat sink that dissipates heat generated from said semiconductor element via said ceramic circuit board,

wherein said Al alloy film comprises at least one rare earth element selected from the group consisting of Y, Sc, La, Ce, Nd, Sm, Gd, Tb, Dy, Er, Th, and Sr in an amount of 1 to 5 atomic percent.

Claim 7 (New): The ceramic circuit board according to claim 1, wherein said circuit layer has a thickness of 0.15 to 0.5 mm.

Claim 8 (New): The ceramic circuit board according to claim 1, wherein said Al alloy film has a thickness of 0.1 to 0.5 μm.

Claim 9 (New): The ceramic circuit board according to claim 1, having a void area ratio of no greater than 9%.

Claim 10 (New): The ceramic circuit board according to claim 1, wherein said ceramic substrate has a thickness ranging from 0.625 to 1.2 mm.

Claim 11 (New): The method according to claim 5, wherein said ceramic substrate has a thickness ranging from 0.625 to 1.2 mm.

Claim 12 (New): The power module according to claim 6, wherein said ceramic substrate has a thickness ranging from 0.625 to 1.2 mm.

Claim 13 (New): The method according to claim 5, wherein said ceramic substrate comprises an aluminum nitride sintered body, a silicon nitride sintered body, a silicon carbide sintered body, or a sialon sintered body.

Claim 14 (New): The power module according to claim 6, wherein said ceramic substrate comprises an aluminum nitride sintered body, a silicon nitride sintered body, a silicon carbide sintered body, or a sialon sintered body.